

**PLANNING COMMISSION SPECIAL SESSION
JOINT MEETING
COMMISSIONER'S HEARING ROOM, COUPEVILLE, WA
Monday May 2, 2016**

	<i>Members Present</i>	<i>Members Absent</i>
<i>District 1</i>	<i>Val Hillers</i>	
	<i>Dean Enell – Chair</i>	
	<i>Karen Krug</i>	
<i>District 2</i>	<i>Jeffery Wallin</i>	
		<i>George Saul</i>
	<i>Darin Hand</i>	
<i>District 3</i>	<i>Jim Caspers</i>	
	<i>Beth Munson</i>	
	<i>Scott Yonkman</i>	

The Planning Commission's Chair, Dean Enell called the Island County Planning Commission meeting to order at 12:34 p.m.

The Board of County Commissioners' Chair, Rick Hannold called the Board of County Commissioners' special session to order.

ROLL CALL

Planning Commission members present: Dean Enell, Karen Krug, Scott Yonkman, James Caspers, Beth Munson, Val Hillers, Darin Hand, Jeffery Wallin.

Board of County Commissioners present: Helen Price Johnson, Rick Hannold, Jill Johnson.

Planning staff present: Keith Higman, Interim Long Range Planning Director; Hiller West, Director of Community Development; Beckye Frey, Long Range Planner; Meredith Penny, Long Range Planner; Nathan Howard, Long Range Planner.

MINUTES:

None to approve at this time.

ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC:

Susan Bennett, 2191 Goss Ridge Rd., Freeland

Ms. Bennett noted that the Navy is asking State Parks permission to use State Parks Property for overt & covert practice training operations. She requested that the Commissioners deny any requests from the Navy to allow these types of operations on County land.

PLANNING COMMISSION JOINT WORKSHOP WITH THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Planner Beckye Frey noted that materials packets will be very large in the future, but staff will be creating memos and change matrices to help provide brief synopses of material. She stated that today's meeting covers four chapters, and the May 23 meeting will cover four more chapters. The Planning Department is aiming to finalize the Freeland Subarea Plan for that meeting as well. She stated that they are nearing finalization of Urban Growth Area (UGA) and Joint Planning Area (JPA) update options for the draft plan. After that, the next step is to prepare a Resolution of Substantial Progress.

She noted that the upcoming Freeland Subarea Plan community meeting date was changed to June 15, 2016.

Planner Frey stated that if we are unable to finalize the draft plan by the original deadline, the fallback date will be July 5, 2016.

CRITICAL AREAS ORDINANCE

Reference material: Memo dated 4/26/16 RE: Critical Area Ordinance Update – Draft Policy Options, with enclosures 2A-Policy Options and 2B-TAG Comments

Planner Meredith Penny stated that the goal for today's Critical Areas Ordinance segment is to discuss:

- Simple changes and edits
- Wetland Rating, Regulations and Monitoring
- Public Safety and Property Risks from Geologic Hazards

Discussion clarified the following points:

Simple Changes and Edits:

- Clarify in Code that Island County uses the Federal Wetlands Delineation Manual. We are not proposing to change the Wetlands Classification System at this time.
- Clarify in Code that we evaluate all development for impacts on water availability.

Wetland Rating, Regulations and Monitoring:

- Island County is currently allowing temporary impacts (less than two years) to Wetlands without mitigation. Bring Code in line with Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas regulations, and apply those same standards to Wetlands. In most Federal and State regulations, impacts of one year or greater require mitigation.
- Ms. Penny observed that Island County's goal is no net loss of wetlands, and providing that policy background within the Comprehensive Plan is one way to further that goal.
- Wetland Mitigation Sequence:

- Ilon Logan, from Environmental Services Associates (ESA) noted that there is support for mitigation even if impacts are expected to last less than two years. She described the sequence as follows:
 - Avoid
 - Minimize
 - Rectify
 - Compensatory Mitigation
- Ms. Logan stated that there are different mitigation options including:
 - Mitigation banking
 - Out-of-watershed mitigation
- Wetland Buffer Reduction: Code currently allows for a 50% buffer reduction in certain circumstances, but Department of Ecology's (DOE) Best Available Science (BAS) indicates that reductions should not be more than 25%.
 - Director Higman noted that this refers to buffer averaging, in which some Buffers may be reduced in exchange for other buffers being increased in type C, D and E Wetlands.
- Alternative Mitigation: Code does not support alternative mitigation strategies (i.e. mitigation banks or fee programs), and could contain provision for these.
- Wetland Monitoring Plan Improvements: Proposed recommendations are to either simplify the program, or to appoint a task force to discuss alternatives.

Public Safety and Risks from Geologic Hazards

- Planner Penny noted that many of our Hazard Areas overlap with Shoreline Master Program (SMP) jurisdiction areas, so some code concerns may be addressed within the next SMP update.

Commissioners agreed to recess at 1:35 p.m. for review of posted materials. During review of these materials, they placed markers and notations on the items which they would like to see moved forward to the May 23rd joint session.

Commissioners returned from recess at 1:53 p.m.

UGA BOUNDARY REVISIONS & JPA UPDATES

Reference materials: Memo dated 4/26/16 RE: 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update – Discussion and Mapping of Urban Growth Area Boundaries & Joint Planning Overlays for Draft Plan

UGA BOUNDARY REVISIONS

Langley UGA changes:

Commissioners learned that the City of Langley is happy with the proposed UGA boundary changes. Commissioners' consensus at this time is to move forward and allow staff to draft these changes.

Freeland NMUGA Boundary Revision Requests:

Planner Frey noted that the Planning Department had received four requests for boundary revision from Freeland property owners:

- Richardson, Highway 525 & Honeymoon Bay Road
 - Mr. Richardson would like to remain within the NMUGA.
 - This request may be satisfied by adding "525 Adjacency" as criteria for inclusion
- Trinity Lutheran Church
 - The Church requested that all its property remain within the NMUGA, since these zoning changes would bisect their property.
 - Planners noted that this property is substantially constrained by Wetlands.
- Wallick, resident of Freeland
 - Mr. Wallick requested that the NMUGA be shrunk to Freeland's commercial core.
 - This is not a reasonable request, since to shrink the NMUGA to the commercial core is contrary to the Growth Management Act's purpose.
- Houseworth, 10-acre parcel adjacent to Freeland Library property
 - Ms. Houseworth would like her property to remain within the NMUGA.

Commissioners agreed to revisit this topic at a later meeting, after they have time to research and legally evaluate these requests. Planners acknowledged that this aspect of the Comprehensive Plan is up for review annually, so the changes being proposed now are not necessarily permanent.

Commissioners agreed to recess at 2:45 p.m., and returned from recess at 2:58 p.m.

JPA UPDATES

COUPEVILLE

- Planner Frey noted that at the last joint community meeting in Coupeville, officials and local residents unanimously agreed to eliminate the Coupeville JPA. However, language will be added to the interlocal agreement that this topic can be revisited in the future. Molly Hughes, Coupeville mayor, and the Town Council agreed with this outcome.

LANGLEY

- Planners stated that after much public discourse and participation, the City of Langley had presented to us their preferred boundaries.
 - Commissioners unanimously decided to move forward with the City's recommendation.
 - This topic will be revisited in 2020.

OAK HARBOR

- Planner Frey noted that public participation indicated that residents are generally in agreement about which areas should be designated Long-Term Rural Significance (LRS), and which should be reserved for future growth.
- Commissioner Jill Johnson suggested that all areas south of Fort Nugent Road be designated Potential Growth Areas (PGA), to send the message that this is where growth should occur first. At the same time, this gives the City of Oak Harbor a little more flexibility than other options.
 - Commissioners agreed to move forward with Commissioner Johnson's suggestion.

2036 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

Reference Materials: Memo dated 4/26/16 RE: 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update – Economic Development, Historic Preservation, Parks and Recreation, and Natural Resources

Planner Nathan Howard stated that the intent of the Update is to clean up the formatting and organization of the Comprehensive Plan. Planners are making it more usable and readable, and including current goals, policies, codes and laws. Additionally, provision will be made within the Comprehensive Plan to create a steadier and more incremental process for future updates.

CHAPTER 2 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Planner Penny observed that this area is being updated to create a framework for future, comprehensive economic development.
- Some sections of language from the Land Use Element had been moved over to the Economic Development Element for clarity and consistency.

CHAPTER 5 HISTORIC PRESERVATION

- Planners are updating this element to reflect current code and policies.
- This element contains the Comprehensive Plan for Ebey's Landing National Historic Reserve, which will be removed and adopted by reference.
- Archaeological resources management is being moved from the Land Use Element to the Historic Preservation Element.

- Staff worked with members of the Ebey's Trust Board and the Reserve Manager to share information and goals.

CHAPTER 6 NATURAL RESOURCES

- This is a new element, but contains information from other areas that has been relocated here:
 - The Water Resource Element language has been moved to this and one other category – Utilities Element and Natural Resources Element.
 - The entire Natural Lands Element has been moved to Natural Resources.
 - Critical Areas and general environmental quality language from the Land Use Element have been moved here.

CHAPTER 7 PARKS AND RECREATION

- This element is being updated to duplicative or unnecessary text.

Commissioners agreed to recess at 3:24 p.m. for review of posted materials. During review of these materials, they placed markers and notations on the items which they would to discuss in more detail.

Commissioners returned from recess at 3:35

Commissioners voiced the following opinions:

Natural Resources

- Education on the importance of natural resources be emphasized and not just the encouragement of public involvement.
- Some of the original language from Natural Resources 10.1.4 should be retained relating to the role private property owners play in land conservation.
- Divestment of public lands: how can those investments can be protected?
- County owned conservation easements and access/trails easements should be added to Natural Resources 12.3.

Historic Preservation

- An annual review of Ebey's Reserve Design Process is too frequent. Property owners need consistency for their projects.
- Relying on the current design review process as an interim solution while the discrepancies are being worked through between that process and the old 1980 Comprehensive Plan for Ebey's Reserve. There are issues with the new process that need to be sorted through as well.
- The language in Goal 2 reading, "the entirety of Island County" should be removed.

Economic Development

- Work done by the Economic Development Council should be considered when the County undergoes the process of developing a Comprehensive Economic Development Element within a year before it becomes too outdated to be of use.
- Existing language within the Economic Development Element should be pulled from the Land Use Element, and be simplified for the time being until more thorough work is done on the element.
- Commissioner Price Johnson expressed concerns about applying blanket policies that will play out very differently in different areas of Island County. Commissioner Hannold expressed that broader policy statements may be able to address this issue, while allowing municipalities to modify their own Comprehensive Plans as needed.

Parks and Recreation

- Trail and access easements: if the County obtains land with a trail or access easement where a trail did not yet exist, would the County be required to install that trail or access?
- Some concerns were raised about the strong policy language about divesting of land without emphasizing transferring to other appropriate public entities. Staff responded by noting that Parks and Recreation 5.3 addresses this.
- Ensure that language for beach and tidelands for public use is included. Staff responded by noting that language related to beach and tideland public access and use exists in Goal 3 and the subsequent policies.

Commissioner Hannold moved to adjourn; Commissioner Johnson seconded; motion carried.

Planning Commissioner Krug moved to adjourn; Commissioner Hillers seconded; motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 4:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Allegra Clarkson